

**BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY**

**NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE**

**August 1, 2000**

**IN RE:**

**SPRINT COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY, L.P.  
TARIFF TO INTRODUCE DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE**

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**DOCKET NO.  
99-00553**

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**ORDER APPROVING TARIFF**

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This matter came before the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (the "Authority") at the regularly scheduled Authority Conference held on September 28, 1999 on the tariff filing of Sprint Communications, Company, L.P. ("Sprint") to introduce directory assistance. Sprint proposes a \$1.40 charge for each intrastate directory assistance request.

Sprint originally filed Tariff No. 99-00553 (the "Tariff") on July 29, 1999 with a proposed effective date of September 1, 1999. At the Authority Conference held on August 24, 1999, the Directors suspended the effective date of this tariff for thirty (30) days through September 30, 1999 to further review the proposed directory assistance charge under the Authority's Rule 1220-4-2-.55(2).<sup>1</sup>

In this Tariff, Sprint proposed a \$1.40 charge for each intrastate directory assistance request, allowing two (2) requests for numbers per call.<sup>2</sup> Sprint's tariff contains no

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<sup>1</sup> Rule 1220-4-2-.55(2) is referred to as the "Interexchange Carrier Rule or the IXC Rule." Interexchange carriers are companies owning facilities in the state which consist of network elements and switches, or other communication transmission equipment used to carry voice, data, image and video traffic across the LATA boundaries within Tennessee (i.e. intrastate interLATA communications) or carry any other communications traffic approved by the Authority for these carriers. Sprint is classified as an interexchange carrier and therefore the IXC rules are applicable.

<sup>2</sup> Sprint currently charges \$1.40 for interstate directory assistance.

provisions for allowances or exemptions; however, credits will be allowed for errors, cut-offs, poor transmission quality, incorrect numbers and misdialed numbers.

After consideration of this matter, by a vote of two to one, the Directors determined that intrastate directory assistance is a competitive service. The majority determined that directory assistance is a service for which consumers have a choice of providers and that other providers offer this service with charges competitive to and in some instances lower than the charge proposed by Sprint.

Sprint complied with Rule 1220-4-2-.55(2)(d) in its tariff proposal to introduce a \$1.40 charge for intrastate directory assistance. Pursuant to Rule 1220-4-2-.55(2)(d), interexchange services are classified into two (2) categories: (1) direct distance dialing (“DDD”) services or (2) All Other Services. The DDD services category includes DDD rate schedules, rates for operator-assisted calls (0+ and 0-) and residential optional calling plans. Rates for services in the DDD category are subject to price cap regulations and may be increased to reflect access charge increases. Services not included in the DDD services category are classified as “All Other Services.” Rates in the “All Other Services” category are not subject to price cap regulations and may be increased upon thirty (30) days notice to affected customers.

The Authority concluded that directory assistance charges do not fall within the DDD services category. First, directory assistance charges are not billed under DDD rate schedules, which apply toll charges based on the distance and duration of telephone calls. Instead, directory assistance charges accumulate on a per request basis, regardless of the distance and duration of the call and whether such calls are local or toll. Secondly, the Authority concluded that directory assistance requests do not constitute 0+ or 0- operated

assisted telephone calls. Directory assistance services and the associated charges are used to obtain information (telephone numbers) only and do not include any portion of operator assistance that can be provided for completing a call.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the Authority concluded that directory assistance services are not considered residential optional calling plans.<sup>4</sup>

Based upon consideration of the tariff filing, a majority of the Directors concluded that directory assistance must be classified within the "All Other Services" category under Rule 1220-4-2-.55(2)(d) and that rate increases are allowable upon thirty (30) days notice to affected customers. Sprint notified its customers of the proposed directory assistance charge through publication in newspapers of general circulation throughout the state. Therefore, the Directors voted two to one to approve Sprint's Tariff.<sup>5</sup>

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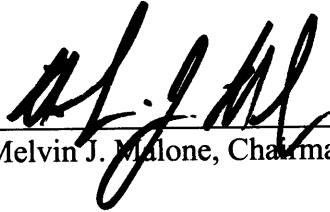
<sup>3</sup> After providing a telephone number via directory assistance, an operator may inform the caller that, for an additional charge, the operator will complete a call to the requested number. (The customer is generally required to press a specified telephone key to have the call connected.) The operator charge for completing a call is billed separately from the directory assistance charge.

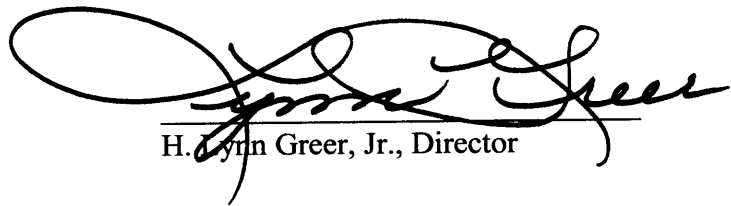
<sup>4</sup> Residential option calling plans are service options tailored to meet the specific needs of a segment of customers and generally provide discounted toll rates in exchange for a customer's volume commitment and/or a monthly recurring charge. These service options may also provide discounts based on time-of-day calling and the types of calls made by customers.

<sup>5</sup> Director Kyle did not vote to approve this Tariff stating that "... because of the public interest, that rate increase and considering the IXC Rule, its just too high, and I vote no." See Transcript of Proceedings, p 15 (Authority Conference September 28, 1999).

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:**


Tariff No. 99-00553 filed by Sprint Communications, L.P. is approved.

  
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Melvin J. Malone, Chairman

  
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H. Lynn Greer, Jr., Director

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Sara Kyle, Director

ATTEST:

  
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K. David Waddell, Executive Secretary

\*\*\*Director Kyle did not vote with the majority.